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## Turquoise Mountain Trust -- Building Livelihoods and Trade

The Turquoise Mountain Trust/Building Livelihoods and Trade (TMT/BLT) project provides ongoing education, training, and economic opportunities for Afghans, in coordination with a revival of Afghanistan's traditional crafts. The program aims to build economic and trade opportunities through: the economic, social and cultural regeneration of Murad Khane, a traditional commercial and craft neighborhood in Kabul's Old City; the establishment and growth of the Institute for Afghan Arts and Architecture, and; business development activities designed to increase domestic and international sales of Afghan crafts.

USAID began providing financial support to TMT in 2007, through a \$250,000 business development grant. In November 2008, USAID awarded TMT a new \$6.1 million three-year grant for the Building Livelihoods and Trade activity.

### Activities:

- **Education:** The Institute for Afghan Arts and Architecture, where a new generation of artisans receive training in traditional Afghan crafts and business management skills.
- **Urban Regeneration:** Restoration of Murad Khane, including repairs of residential and commercial buildings, infrastructure development, and the construction for the Institute of Afghan Arts and Architecture.
- **Community Development:** The development and delivery of community, health, and education programs.
- **Business Development:** Supporting the production of and market linkages for high quality Afghan arts and crafts in support of economic growth and cultural revival in Afghanistan.

### Results as of January 2010:

- 110 students educated in the Schools of Woodwork, Ceramics, Calligraphy & Painting, and Jewelry & Gem-Cutting. Development of wider student skills through additional classes in Dari literacy, English, art history, drawing, design, IT and business; the first class graduated in December 2009.
- Full *City & Guilds* accreditation for the Institute's curricula granted; accredited and registered by the Afghan Ministry of Education.
- Completed commissions totaling over \$450,000, which were exported to the United States, Canada, Japan, United Arab Emirates and Switzerland.
- Continued major rehabilitation of five more of Murad Khane's historic buildings as future sites of the Institute's Schools; due for completion in 2010.
- Clearance of over 17,000 m3 of rubbish and repairs and rebuilding of 30 community houses.
- Expansion of the Murad Khane Public School, providing primary education to 120 children and supplementary education to 60 children.
- Consolidation and expansion of the community education programs for women, including the Literacy Program, which provided literacy classes for 56 women and a separate class for eight men.
- Consolidation of the community health and hygiene program, addressing sanitation, nutrition, domestic violence and drug addiction. Community Health workers visit all 100 households in Murad Khane on a monthly basis.

TMT is registered as an NGO with the Afghan Department of Economy, as one of the Prince's Charities in the UK, and as a US 501 organization in the United States. TMT receives additional financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency, UNESCO, UNDP, The Prince's Charities, The Kingdom of Bahrain, the Government of Kuwait, AlWaleed Bin Talal Foundation (Saudi Arabia), the British Embassy, and charitable organizations and private donors worldwide.

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